



The Online Marketing Made Easy Podcast with Amy Porterfield Session #26 The Power of Virtual Support and Outsourcing with Chris Ducker

Show notes at: <http://www.amyporterfield.com/26>

Amy: You're listening to the Online Marketing Made Easy podcast episode #26.

Announcer: Welcome to the Online Marketing Made Easy podcast -- business advice so easy, you'll feel like you're cheating. And now your host, Amy Porterfield!

Amy: Well, hello there! Amy Porterfield here and welcome to another episode of the Online Marketing Made Easy podcast.

I am recording this episode literally hours before I jump on a plane and head to the Philippines. I've never been to the Philippines before, so this will be an adventure for sure. Now, it's funny that I'm recording this episode today, because today's episode is all about virtual staffing and outsourcing. I've invited back my good friend, Chris Ducker, because he is THE expert on this topic.

I'm actually going to the Philippines to speak at Chris' event called Tropical Think Tank. I'm really excited for it! The participants seem outstanding and I get to speak alongside Pat Flynn and John Dumas, really good friends of mine, Greg Hickman's going to be there, Natalie Sisson, some really great speakers, and I know we're going to have a lot of fun.

I'm looking forward to that. However, I'm not looking forward to that really, really long flight. The good news is, it's a red eye, so hopefully I'll be sleeping most of it!

Anyway, let's talk about today's show. Today's show is all about, as I mentioned, the power of virtual support and outsourcing. This is an important area for me, because I recently learned a very valuable lesson. I've been told by my mentors over and over again that it is possible to actually work less and make a bigger impact, a bigger impact in your profits and just a bigger impact with the people that you work with.

I never truly believed it. I actually thought they were making this up because it really sounded good. But in 2013, I streamlined my business and truly, from a very personal level, experienced how you can work less and actually make more.

Now, I talk all about the whole 2013 experience in episode 23, so you can find that at AmyPorterfield.com/23. The reason that I bring up my experience in 2013 was because when you get the right support, you truly can do less and make more.

But without that right support, it's almost impossible. That's why I think the topic today is so valuable to anyone building a business online and wanting more freedom in their life. Since Chris has been on the show before, we're actually going to dive in a little deeper on this topic.

For those of you who do NOT know who Chris is, he is a serial entrepreneur. He's a virtual staffing expert, a blogger, a podcaster, and he recently authored the book [Virtual Freedom](#), which is a fantastic read and I highly recommend it.

In this episode, right from the start Chris gets really personal about a recent experience he had with burnout, and how his burnout did not affect his business at all. But I'm going to let Chris tell you that story.

Also, Chris dives into the mindset and mechanics around expanding your team with virtual support. With the mindset, it takes a different way of looking at your business and your role in your business to see the value of letting go and leveraging. As for the mechanics? These are the strategies and tools that you can use to optimize your outsourcing experience. So, Chris will get into all of this in our interview together.

So let's go ahead and dive in.

Amy: Hey Chris! Thanks so much for being on the show today! I really appreciate it.

Chris: It is all my pleasure, and thank you so much for having me back!

Amy: Yes, we always have so much fun, don't we? Every time we get together!

Chris: Either that or you're a sucker for punishment! [laughs]

Amy: Very true, very true. It might be a little bit of both.

Chris: Yeah, maybe.

Amy: So, here's the deal--I recently got to see you in Vegas, which is always fun, and we had this great conversation and out of it you kind of really surprised me with something, because in my mind you're Mr. VA, and you've got it all together, you've got these great people working for you virtually--and you told me you recently experienced burnout, and I was so surprised to hear it.

Chris: Yeah. I mean...I am Mr. VA, right? You know, I've got a total of 14 virtual assistants working for me now.

Amy: That is a lot.

Chris: As you know, I have the big company, the facility and everything. 250+ staff within a facility. But I do have 14 virtual employees now.

And yeah, I burnt out. I hit a wall towards the end of November and basically was just no good to anybody for anything for a couple of weeks, quite frankly. The reason why is because I might be Mr. VA, Mr. Delegation and everything, but I'm also an entrepreneur as well. As you know, entrepreneurs have, you know, 10 ideas an hour minimum, bare minimum. We also have an issue with saying the word "no" to opportunities when they come to us as well.

Something happened, you know, October going into November. I was working on my brand new [boot camp course](#), which is now launched, but I was working on that and I set myself an insane launch date of December 16, because I wanted to have it done and finished by the end of the year. It was obvious to me that it just wasn't coming together the way I wanted it to. I needed to spend more time developing it. It turned out brilliant, but the reason why is because I didn't rush it.

So, I presold over 100 people for the course.

Amy: Wow.

Chris: And then I emailed them all and I said "Look, I need more time, I'm not feeling good. Quite frankly, I'm human. I need to switch off. I'm going to be launching this now February 1."

And that's exactly what happened. I said "If you want a refund, if you don't want to wait, that's all good, not a problem." And I had about, I think, 119 sold, something like that--only two people wanted a refund, which was brilliant.

Amy: Oh, good.

Chris: Yeah. So, yeah. That was one of the instigators to the burnout. The other thing was, I was hardcore in preparation for the marketing of the book and then I was also in the process of getting ready for two completely different speaking gigs as well, which were in the first week of January. So I was just killing myself. It was so obvious.

I was suffering from migraines. I came out with a rash on my neck, a stress rash. But I went to a doctor and the doctor's like "Oh, that's caused by acute stress." We did my blood work, it all came back relatively OK, but the fact of the matter is that it was my body telling me that I needed to switch off for a bit.

I don't care how successful you are, I don't care how much work you delegate, I don't care how automated your business is, if you don't take care of yourself and switch off regularly as an entrepreneur, you are going to hit that wall. You are going to experience burnout at some point.

For different people, it's different things, you know what I mean? In terms of the way you're affecting things like that. But for me it was definitely my body crying out for some downtime and that's exactly what I did the first couple of weeks of December. I did literally nothing.

Amy: I love that you are just honest about this, because you have this fantastic book coming out and it's really about freedom, you know creating a life by your own design. But that doesn't mean that you're not going to have these obstacles along the way, and I think that's so important! Especially for a lot of people that are listening that are just starting out on their entrepreneurial journey, and they're thinking "Okay, when I get to this point, it's all going to fall together. It's all going to be perfect." And it always is a little bit messy behind the scenes. Would you agree?

Chris: Absolutely. I couldn't agree more! The other thing is--you used a perfect term there--you design your own life, right?

Amy: Yes.

Chris: Even though you might want to delegate and you might get a great virtual team build up and all the rest of it, that will create more time. You know, I often talk about buying more time, because it's our most valuable commodity as entrepreneurs, right? And working with virtual teams--that's exactly what's going to happen. You will buy more time.

But then as the entrepreneur it's up to you to do what you want to do with that additional time, and some people will go a little crazy, some people will do absolutely nothing with it, and some people go into "Manage Mode" as I call it. But for me, it was obvious. At third quarter of last year, I just did too much, plain and simple, and so I promised myself going forward that it ain't gonna happen again.

It's the second time that I hit burnout in my career. The last time was about seven years ago. And, yeah, I'm not having any of it anymore now. This is it.

Amy: Well--

Chris: Mr. Cool going forward!

Amy: [laughs] I like that, for sure. But one thing I thought was really cool and why I wanted to bring you on the show and first, just open up with talking about this burnout that recently happened, was that when you do have something big like that where you've got to step away and just shut down everything for a little bit, the greatest thing is, you had a virtual team that kept the company going for you. Not EVERYTHING had to shut down, and a lot of us don't have that, don't have that team yet behind us.

So, talk a little bit about a fact that you got to leave but you still had people doing what they needed to do, right?

Chris: Yeah. I mean, you know, fact of the matter is, is that I've developed this time over the last, really, six-odd years or so. But I've grown it a lot over the last three years. I really catapulted it over the last three years.

One of the reasons why is because I didn't want to be run by my business anymore. I wanted to run my business myself, the other way around. So that was exactly what was happening. As the business was growing and was getting more and more successful, and I was getting more and more traction with the stuff I was doing online as well, which I just love more than anything else that I do, it was obvious that I needed to bring more people on board to not just help me run it, but also to take myself out of it as much as possible as well.

I'm really glad that you bring up the fact that whilst I was recovering, drinking lots of freshly squeezed juice that my lovely wife was preparing for me daily and just basically sleeping all day, that nothing crashed. Literally! I mean, the entire business, it was as if Chris wasn't even gone, and I love that.

You do that by hiring the right people for the right roles. You do that by putting the right systems in place. But, really, it comes down to the people and it comes down to the culture and everything around that, and I'm blessed, Amy. I'm totally blessed, being in the position where I am where, you know, I can take almost two weeks off--literally take it off, like off the grid almost!

I mean, I had people emailing me saying things like "Chris, are you okay, we haven't seen you on Twitter for the last week and a half. What's going on?" sort of thing. I totally went off the grid for a while. And--

Amy: And I think you should be able to! You know, as we build our business, I think that's so important.

Now, moving forward, I know you're probably going to do this but I'd love to see you book two weeks where you're going to take off--but you plan on taking off, not because you're totally burned out. But still, it's amazing that so many of us leave our corporate jobs--and I'm speaking for myself as well--get into, you know, building our own business, and I love every minute of it.

However, I can see the burnout coming, I can see when it's coming when I've just been pushing way too hard. So, the idea--and your entire book is really about this, about finding a way to let go of everything you think you need to control. You know, you talked about this in episode sixteen. The super--what is it? Superhero Syndrome?

Chris: Superhero syndrome, yeah.

Amy: Yes! Tell us again what that is, just briefly.

Chris: Well, I mean, Superhero Syndrome is typical of entrepreneurs, right? It's like if there's a way to do it yourself and not involve somebody else, for whatever reason, you'll do that.

Amy: Yes.

Chris: If there's a way for you to learn how to do a task, so that you don't have to spend money getting somebody else to do it, you'll do that. Superhero Syndrome is when the word recharge really only applies to your cell phone. Literally, right?

And we do it--I mean, as entrepreneurs we're weirdoes, we're strange people, we have major issues to deal with in between our ears, because we believe that we can do--we believe that nobody else can do any of this but us. And it's complete BS and we're kidding ourselves.

There are people out there that can probably do--I reckon there's probably people out there that can do 90% of what I do just as well as me, if not maybe a little bit better. But we have issues. That's the mentality of the entrepreneur. But we have issues letting go. But the moment we do that, the moment we start building the team around us, not only does life become easier, not only do you get more freedom and you get more time but you become way more successful because you've got a great team!

Imagine having five Amys working on your business. You would kick major league butt!

Amy: I like looking at it that way! I mean, especially because we all have a little ego tied to we can do it better than anyone else, but if there were five of me, then that's sounding pretty good.

Chris: Yeah. I mean, we have major ego. Let's not beat around the bush. [laughing] We believe that we are the head honcho in every area--I mean, seriously, ego can hurt you so much, as well as a busy owner, but--you know, really, it comes down to just being smart, and it comes down to, like I said, hiring the right people for the right roles, putting them in place, and letting them--this is the thing.

This is another thing, when people do start outsourcing, when they do start building a virtual team, they have that then the micromanager role comes into play where they're hanging off the shoulders of their VA like a virtual vulture, right? And they're just micromanaging them to death. That, for me, completely defeats the objective of this entire outsourcing game because now you're just a--you're a micromanager, that's what you're doing, instead of actually utilizing the time better.

And that's another thing we have issues with. When we do let go, and get someone else to do the work, a lot of the time we're warrant to, like I said, hang off their shoulder and watch them do it. That's crazy! Like, just let go and be free and get on and do something way more high level, you know what I mean?

Amy: It's so true. I always thing of--David Frey was saying, I think I saw it somewhere on Facebook about the day he decided to work less, was the day he started to make more.

Chris: I love that.

Amy: And I really do believe, you know, pulling yourself back and building a team to still support the foundation of your business, to me is one of the most important things you can do early on when you're starting your business. I always say I hired my first VA when I really didn't think I could afford her, and I wasn't exactly sure what I was going to have her do--best decision I ever made. So I do think it's so important.

Chris: Right. And now look at what you achieved!

Amy: Yes! And I've added more people to the team. You just got to take that first leap. With that first leap--because I know a lot of people listening, they constantly, people are asking me--"How do you know you need a VA?" or "What do you give to a VA?" So when I was reading your book, I loved just right in the beginning you talked about these [three lists of freedom](#), and I thought that is a great place for people to start. So, talk to us a little bit about those lists, because it's so important.

Chris: Yeah. I mean, this is a list that I actually put together the first time I hit burnout, and I didn't realize at the time that I was putting together this exercise that years later I would've made tens of thousands people around the world do either online or in live presentations or on podcasts or whatever.

And what I did is I just sat down--you get a piece of paper, you draw two lines down it, creating three columns. In the first column you put a list of all the things that you just don't like doing. Day to day stuff that you have to handle that you do every day, pretty much, that you hate. You will procrastinate until the cows come home. You know what I mean? Like, I'm not going to do this.

And then what happens is at the end of the day you do it, you rush it, sometimes you screw it up. But even if you do screw it up, you don't care because you hate that part. That's the kind of list, you know what I mean?

Amy: Yeah, that's the dark list.

Chris: Yeah. [chuckle] That's the dark side. Let's go geeky. Let's go George Lucas on everyone.

But no, that kind of, "oh, God not this" kind of thing. So that's the first list.

The second list, the list of all the things that you can't do. This is where the superhero syndrome comes into play, because we believe we can do everything, right? And I often tell a story about when I wanted to launch my first blog, I went out and bought a premium theme for \$80 or whatever it was, and then I designed it and turned myself into a PHP coder overnight and tried to screw around with it and customize the thing.

Literally three or four days later it's still not looking the way I want it to look. What did I do? I went off on [eLance](#), I posted it, I got some guy in the middle of nowhere in Europe somewhere to do it for \$150 in 3 hours or something, right? You talk about buying more time, there you go right there!

But major lesson learned--there are plenty of things that Chris and Amy and everybody listening in here can't do. That's for that second list, right?

The third list to me is the most important one. This is the one that demands a little quiet time. You have to sit down, maybe a glass of wine, right? Or beer, whatever is your beverage your choice for pondering, and this is a list of all the things that as a business owner you feel you shouldn't actually be doing.

It really gets you thinking, because going back to list one and two, you might like doing these tasks. You might be really, really good doing these tasks. But should you be doing it as a business owner?

Amy: That is the big aha moment, I think, for everybody when they sit down and do that list. That's a biggie.

Chris: Yeah, it is. And I mean, you know, you should be doing high level things like product and service creation and launch. Spending more time with your 20% top clientele. Traveling to conferences to network and build relationships. This is the stuff that you should be doing as a business owner. NOT updating your, you know, your Facebook page live. You can work with a team of VAs to get status messages together and schedule them out weekly. PLEASE do that.

Amy: Yeah, that's a biggie. For everybody listening, because I obviously work in social media, scheduling your posts across all platforms--so very important, and using a virtual team to help you do that, it still can be your voice. You give them the direction.

But they can help you pull all that together. It's amazing how much time that really does take if you're trying to do it all live alone. So that's a big one. Yeah.

Chris: Yeah, I have one VA, that what she does every Friday, she'll put together next week's, and I genuinely, I don't really update on weekends. Monday through Friday.

Amy: Me, too.

Chris: Two updates a day. And so on Friday she'll put together 10 updates for the next week, and she'll send them through to me in a Word file. And it'll, you know, everything from some of my old content that I want to bring up to people's eyeballs again, or it'll be new content, or it'll be other people's content or it'll be an image to share or a video to link or something along those lines.

And then what will happen is, I will get that on Friday and then I will approve--I will make any little tweaks, like you say, to add my own voice to it. It takes me literally ten minutes to go through that document. I upload it to Dropbox, she then grabs a hold of it, and she schedules those tweets out--the Facebook messages, for the entire week ahead.

Amy: That is golden.

Chris: That will be happening today. That will be happening TODAY.

Amy: Okay, so this is good stuff, because that is the perfect way to--even if you're just starting with a VA, that is a perfect place to start. And when you're telling me all this, I can hear that little voice in my head. Although I've been able to get past this voice it's still there sometimes where I start to think about "Okay, I need to give this to my team" and this voice

says "Yeah, but if you just do it right now it's faster than having to explain to someone how to do it."

Chris: Yeah, yeah, yeah. See, I want to counter this right now. That is one of the biggest issues here, right?

Amy: Yes!

Chris: "I can do it faster than telling somebody else how to do it." But here's the thing-- record that task when you're doing it and talk about that task and show whoever it is that's going to end up looking at this video, this screencast that you're shooting--because it's a five minute task right?

Once you've done that video, you will never have to do that task again!

Amy: There you go.

Chris: So give that to your VA and get them to do it from there on out. And here's the beautiful thing--even if that VA moves on at some point in the future for whatever reason, you still got that video. You still don't have to do that task. You just say to your new VA "Learn how to do this, watch this video. It's in this folder on Dropbox." Huge! So that--

Amy: That really is.

Chris: That mentality of "I can do it faster myself than teaching someone else how to do it"? True, you absolutely can. But when you do it that one last time, record the damn thing and show someone else how to do it at the same time so you never have to do it again. I love that!

Amy: That's so true. Yes. I think that is definitely the way to go, because when I was reading your book one of the things that kept popping up is you were talking about how training your virtual staff, the biggest challenge you're going to run into is yourself.

Chris: Oh good god, absolutely.

Amy: Yeah. So that's the thing, you know, that one little tip you just gave is the perfect way to dive in and not put yourself in that--not make yourself that obstacle.

Chris: Right, absolutely. And we all--we are the biggest problem when it comes to training our virtual team. We are. Because, you know, sometimes we can forget to really define a role properly and they have issues with that. Sometimes we don't handle setting

expectations properly, right? So we say "Ehhh, I want you to send a report every Wednesday" for example.

And then Wednesday 5pm rolls around, you don't get your report, you're starting to get a little digie about the whole situation and upset about it, but then the VA sends it through to you at 6 o'clock and you're like "Well, why didn't you send it at noon?"

And they say "Well, you didn't tell me to." So you've got to set those expectations properly, you know what I mean?

Amy: Yes, for sure.

Chris: And a big one is actually not assuming anything. This is one of the biggest issues that people make when they start working with new staff, whether it be in person or virtually or whatever, is assuming that they know exactly how you want things done right out of the gate. They might have the skillset and the experience needed to do the tasks or to handle a role for which you hired them for. They don't know that you like your spreadsheets, you know, with blue and red colors and Arial size 12. They don't know that.

They might put that together in pink and green colors and Time Roman size 10, you know what I mean? They don't know. You got to set not expectations rather, but you got to tell people exactly what you want when you start working with them because if you assume that they know exactly what you're all about, you're going to be let down. There's no doubt about it. Like, over and over and over again. So I think it's important to really spend time with new recruits and let them get to know you.

I mean, you've hired this person to help you run support and grow your business, right? So spend some damn time with them. It's not a pill you can pop and everything's going to work perfectly right out of the gate. You got to invest a little time up front with it.

Amy: And that's where, you know, where if we're really being real about this whole thing, it's not like you can just hire a virtual assistant or a virtual team and within a week everything's up and running. You do definitely have to be disciplined and put the effort in but to me, anything worth, you know, anything that is a great reward at the end, you've got to put the effort in, in the beginning. That's just life.

I think that people have to move past that.

Chris: Right. Just think of, you know, the relationship that you have with your spouse. When you first started dating them, it's all kind of lovey-dovey and you're holding hands and "Ooooh I love you!" "I love you too! Mmmwwaaah!" All that sort of stuff.

But then as time goes by you do become a little reliant on each other. You do learn, you know, everything about that person. And you got to carry on doing things to keep that spark alive. You got to carry on doing things to, you know, to not just love and support but also to move them and inspire them and all that sort of stuff.

The perfect example is, me and my wife, we like to do yoga. When I hurt my back and I had to have back surgery a couple of years ago, that's really when we discovered yoga. It just so happened that she wanted to come to the sessions with me to make sure that the instructors were looking after me properly, right?

So then, we've been doing yoga every single day for about a month or so and after one particular session I looked at her and she said "How's your back? You feeling okay? What do you think...?"

And I said "I feel great but you know what I just realized honey?"

"What's that?" she said.

"Doing this together, I get to spend an average of five extra hours with you, just the two of us, Monday through to Friday."

Amy: Nice!

Chris: Isn't that great? And she looked at me and was like "Oh Honey, that's the nicest thing you've said to me for years!"

It's like, the little things, it's just like--I'm not suggesting you say things like that to your VA! But what I am saying is spending time with your VA is important.

Throwing the odd curve ball their way is important as well. Just because they're your general VA, every now and then, throw a little curve ball. See, just see, if they might, maybe, be able to learn how to do a very simple edit for a video that you want to put online.

Amy: Oh, interesting!

Chris: It's not their task, but throw a little curve ball, you see what I'm saying? Throw a little curve ball. See if you can point them toward a particular YouTube video that shows them how to do a little bit of SEO work. Throw that little curve ball.

If they're a web developer, ask them to, you know, dip into your calendar and see whether they can manage your calendar for a day or two, just a little curve ball every now and then. Keep things fresh, keep things new. I love that sort of stuff; I do it all the time.

Amy: I think that's a fantastic tip. You might be pleasantly surprised by how excited they are to take something on that's different.

Chris: Absolutely.

Amy: And I have noticed that I have a virtual team, there's four people on my virtual team, and every time I spend a little extra time on any of them, whether I'm listening to something that they're having a challenge with or I just explain myself better--I definitely have to get better at that, making sure they really understand what's going on--but I just always notice how much they appreciate it, and my team's fantastic all the time, but they're just a little extra fantastic when I know I've put the effort in.

Chris: Right, right.

Amy: It makes a difference.

Chris: And that extra fantastic mode they get into, whether it lasts for ten minutes or an entire day, it makes all the difference for you as the boss, it makes all the difference for your business and most importantly it makes all the difference to your customers.

Because let's not beat around the bush here--we are in business. This isn't fun and games! We're in business! And every business on the planet has either a product or a service or an experience that they are selling to an end user. The moment you forget that is the moment that you just completely and utterly burn your business down.

I often--I get upset, because I'm a hardcore entrepreneur, right? So I get really, really mad, when I hear entrepreneurs "well, you know what, if I have to focus on my business, this is what I'm going to focus on! Number one, bringing on board new customers. Number two, taking care of my existing customers. Number three, taking care of my team. I got to make sure my team is happy."

I call so much BS on that. That kind of attitude makes me so mad, because here's the thing--let's flip that back up on its ass, quite frankly. Can I say ass on your podcast?

Amy: [laugh] Well, you have, so, we're going to say yes.

Chris: You can bleep it if you want! I don't know how clean this show is. But how about number one, you take care of your team first? Because they're the machine behind your business right? Then you take care of your *existing* customers. And then you go off to new business.

Amy: So important! I love that you brought this up.

Chris: Yeah. I love this stuff.

Amy: Yeah.

Chris: I could talk about this for hours! Particularly somebody as fantastic as you.

Amy: Oh, you, Chris. You always make me laugh.

Chris: [laughs heartily]

Amy: Let's see here--you do! Everything--earlier you said a word I've never even heard. It was "digie." What the heck is digie?

Chris: Digie? I got to explain it because now you brought it up!

Amy: Okay, what is that word?

Chris: So, I'm from London, I'm from England, right? We like that we--we have butchered our own bloody language, is what we've done. We've really ruined it over the years. And now we come up with--because we can't butcher anymore. Now what we do is we just make up words.

Digie was a word that I first came into contact with probably in my mid-teens by a buddy of mine, Danny, that I used to play basketball with. And it's basically just, like, getting--everything from getting angry to being REALLY mad. You know, "Oh, don't touch my computer when I'm on it! You're going to get me really digie!"

Amy: Well, where would that word come from?!

Chris: I don't know! I'm not the giver of all information here! I don't know everything! But I just know that it's a great word and--

Amy: I might start using it.

Chris: Oh, you've got to. Everyone listening in, this is your mission should you choose to accept it. This message will self-destruct in five seconds. I want you to use the word "digie" at least once in the next 24 hours to somebody completely randomly that they've never heard the word before and then tweet me @chrisducker, let me know what the reaction is!

Amy: I love it. All right, we're on a mission for sure, because that is a funny word to me.

Okay, so I'm going to get serious here. I want--here's a question I get asked all the time. Ready? It is "Local or overseas?" I've got to hear your opinion on this.

Chris: Great question. And the answer is wherever the best person for the role is.

Amy: So you're not persuaded to do overseas even though you're in the Philippines and that's where your team is.

Chris: Correct, because I also have VAs--out of my 14 VAs, I have one in the United States, I have two down under in Australia, and I have one in the UK, and then I've got ten people here.

Amy: Do you struggle with time zones with everybody?

Chris: No, not really. Because everybody kind of knows that, obviously, I'm on the Philippine time zone for the large majority of the year. You know, we work within base camp for certain projects and it's not our everyday communication method, so--okay, I'll break it down. There's three basic ways that I communicate with my staff, right? My virtual staff, anyway.

The first one is [Basecamp](#). But that's for project based stuff that we're doing. For example, we just redesigned the Virtual Staff Finder website, which went live about a week or so ago. We were working on that on and off for a couple of months. There's no great rush, on the redesign of that. So it was all in one place and it was all easy to find.

Then it'll be email for day-to-day correspondence, but I only get one email message every day from my team members, and usually it's only really normally about four or five of them that will email me within a day, and basically what that is, is a bullet point list of what they've done that day.

And at the end of every email is--I want a suggestion from them. I want them to suggest something to me, based on what they've done that day, that can help our business become more effective and efficient or help us make more money.

Now, I want to clarify-- a lot of the time those suggestions are useless. They're putting it in there because they have to because the boss says it needs to be done. But there is one particular suggestion that happened middle of last year that has made me close to \$100,000 since then.

Amy: What are you talking about?

Chris: It was the Virtual Staff Finder Training Academy course that we launched, which is-- my VA, basically one of my VAs said "You know what would be really good, boss? If the Pilipino VAs that we help find our clients at Virtual Staff Finder had a course that was actually put together by Pilipino VAs so there's nothing lost in translation with the training. That would be kind of cool, don't you think?"

And I'm just like "DING! DING! DING! DING!"

Amy: Okay, that's awesome!

Chris: Awesome. Came out of one of those daily reports from my VA. We put it together, 15 hours of training, 75+ videos, and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people bought it since.

Amy: That is so cool! And I always come back to--I'm always an emotion kind of girl, and how good does that VA feel, that they got to contribute in that way? I mean that's so cool!

Chris: Yeah, absolutely. They love--in fact, I bought her an iPad Mini for it.

Amy: Oh, I love it!

Chris: And I told the entire team as well, I said that they can come up with some good [bleep], too.

Amy: Yes! Hey--you're not allowed to say that word!

Chris: OH GOD! I'm so sorry!

Amy: I'm gonna just bleep you.

Chris: You'll have to bleep me, yeah. I'm sorry.

Amy: Chris is a hard one to control. He's one of my most wild friends I have, which is why, probably I love hanging out with you, so.

Chris: Yeah, [inaudible] very--[laughing]

Amy: Yes. So, okay, this is so fantastic, I could actually go on and on about different things in terms of building your team because I've seen it just change my business dramatically, and that's why I was like, every single page I was paying attention to every suggestion you had, because--

Chris: I love that, I love the fact that that was the case.

Amy: Yeah, definitely! I mean, there's just--and I like how you created the book in a way that's very actionable. Like, you're not just going big picture, you're getting very detailed, which is how I learn. I have to say, kudos to you, what a fantastic resource and I love--I heard you say somewhere, um, the time has come for you to fall in love with your business. And--or, fall back in love with your business.

And I LOVE that because so many of us started this business and we're getting very overwhelmed, but we have to remember why we started it, and it really comes down to freedom, and that's exactly what you say.

Chris: It does. And I mean, you know, I said that in the book because I fell in love with my businesses all over again once I got this team built up, because of the freedom that my team brought me. But also because of the additional success that I saw from having that team on board with me.

I mean, if you think back to when you first started your business, so much passion, so much enthusiasm. You're getting up at 6am and you're doing 12 hour days and you don't even feel like you're working. You're on the top of the world. And nobody can upset you and this is great, "I'm going to be a gazillionaire, I'm going to help thousands and thousands of people around the world because of this this and this!"

And then what happens a year in, you start to get tired. A year in, you're not waking up at 6, you're waking up at 9, because you were up until 2 handling customer emails. And then a year in, you just--there's no passion. You're just on auto-maintenance mode, right? At that point, that's where a lot of businesses start failing, because no longer are you passionate, no longer are you highly actionable business owner, you are in that maintenance mode. It's up to you, you're the only person that can snap out of that. And literally, like I say in the book, fall in love with your business again.

You fell in love with it when you first started it, and being a business owner is just one of the most beautiful things on the planet, because you control your own destiny, literally! I mean, if you think of that word destiny, it all comes down to the people you interact with, the money that you make--because let's not beat around the bush, we live in a very materialistic-based world. You need money to get the things that make your life more comfortable and more enjoyable and all the rest of it. And once you're in your own realm and you've developed a business either around a brand or a product or a service or an experience or whatever--you are in control of your own destiny. The moment you let that start to slip through your fingers, it feels horrible, so I do.

I am on--with all joking on one side, with this book, I am on a mission to not only help business owners fall in love with their businesses all over again, but I'm on a mission to fundamentally change the mindset of an entire generation of entrepreneurs that have begun to believe that more hours worked is a more successful business.

Amy: Ah! So true! I love that!

Chris: Yeah, yeah. I mean, honestly I am on a genuine mission. A genuine mission. I remember watching that video a while back by a guy called Nigel Marsh. You got to find this--it's a [Work/Life Balance video](#) that he did for TED.

Amy: Okay, I'll look it up and put it in the show notes.

Chris: You got to, because it's a great video. And he talks about how one day, one of his friends came through and said "Nigel, I had enough of it. I'm working 16 hour days, I'm tired all the time. My diet's terrible. I don't know what to do here. I can't do this anymore, so I've decided to join a gym."

So his reaction to his friend, it was a great speech, but his reaction to his friend was something along the lines of "Well, I'm not being funny or anything, but, you know, joining a gym doesn't make you a better business owner or a less stressed business owner. Joining a gym just makes you a more fit, overworked business owner." Or words to that effect. I'm not doing it justice. It's a great line that he comes out with.

He genuinely--when I watch that clip, to be frank with you, I actually choked up and cried when I watched that clip because he also talked about spending time with his son at the end of one particular day, and his kid turned around and said something like "Dad, this has been the best day of my life, ever."

Amy: Wow. That's--that's where it really counts. I'm so glad you brought this up, because I always have a theme for my business every year, and this year, and my entire team's on board, is to work less while making a bigger impact. That's just really what we are all about in terms of everything we do. We just want to be more efficient and get smarter about how we spend our time.

It's because I want to spend more time with my hunky husband and my son, Cade, and just do more stuff that I really enjoy. And that's really, truly, how this book will help you get there. That's why I'm so excited about it. I want to get it in the hands of as many people as possible, because I don't want to be dramatic but it's life-changing in the way of when you have more freedom, your possibilities are endless, so your opportunities are endless. And that's why I think I get so excited about it.

You have this really cool thing going on, this 5 book bundle. You got to tell us about it.

Chris: Ah, yeah, yeah, yeah. No, I'm--like I said, I'm on a mission! I'm on a mission, here!

Basically, what I did was I--you see all these big, big, big names like Tim Ferriss and Gary Vaynerchuk, all these huge, big-deal names. They put these book bundles together, right, when they're putting out a new book to sort of try to get lists and all the rest of it.

Don't get me wrong, I would love it, if *Virtual Freedom* was to hit any kind of list in any way, shape or form. But I'm honestly really focused on just trying to get it into as many hands as possible to bring that freedom, right? So, we came up, me and my team, we came up with this five book bundle, which I believe will make a massive difference, not to just yourself, if you purchase it, but also to a number of people around you, around your business, as well.

So what it is, is you buy five copies of the book, you get to keep one copy, but you also then get to have access to a companion workbook that we put together that is a 25 page downloadable PDF, which is beautifully designed. What it does--you can literally work on that workbook as you're reading through the book.

Three list to freedom exercise, you've got the space there in the book to recreate those three lists. And there's lots and lots of different stuff that goes, you know, interview questions that you want to write down for your interviews and the whole thing, right the way down to content systems and all the rest of it.

Amy: That's what I mean about actionable. You're really making this book actionable. I love that!

Chris: Oh, super, super, super, absolutely! And then we're adding in additional case studies that didn't make it to the final book, because all the case studies were amazing. I had to cut, unfortunately, three. Otherwise the book was going to be like 800 pages long or something! So, I'm adding in those three different case studies so you can learn from other entrepreneurs in the way that they're working with their teams as well.

And then lastly, and this is the big kahuna here, a five video course where I take you through the finding, the hiring, the training, the managing and the motivating of your virtual team. 5 completely different videos, which is not going to be available online. I'm not going to be selling it. I'm not going to be giving it away for anybody else, except those that purchase the 5 book bundle.

Here's the beautiful thing--if that wasn't enough, get this. You then get to give away your other four copies to your best business buddies and help bring whole freedom to them as

well. And by all means, share the PDF with them, share the videos with them as well! I'm all cool with all that.

Amy: Oh, that's fantastic! And I love that it's 5 books instead of 100 books, I mean--which, most of us, like, what are we going to do with 100 books? But 5, you got to, you get to pay it forward a little bit, and that's really cool as well.

Chris: Right, exactly. You know, people don't want the five books, no problem! Just pick up one copy, that's all cool. I just want to help as many people as I can with it.

Amy: Well, hopefully--I'd like everybody to pick up those five book bundles and kind of pay it forward and find other people that you think would find great value in the book. You can go to VirtualFreedomBook.com, and learn all about this whole book bundle and preorder and get things going right away. VirtualFreedomBook.com, but I'll add the link in the show notes as well.

Chris, I Love having you on the show. You actually are only my second repeat guest! So--

Chris: Wow! Who's the first one?

Amy: Marie Forleo. So Marie got to come on twice.

Chris: Oh, Marie?

Amy: I know, she beat ya.

Chris: I mean...I know. I'm up there with Marie Forleo now! I feel like I've arrived!

Amy: Big time, right? I mean, that woman's on fire. So, yeah. Thank you so much for being on the show, and thanks for writing this book! It's a fantastic book and I know you put your heart and soul into it and it really shows.

Chris: No, I--you know what, I am genuinely very thankful for you having me back on. I really am. And the last time I was on I had so much great feedback in regards to our conversation and so, you know, I just--I love you so much, I'd do anything for you, you know that. So, thank you so, so much for letting me be in everybody's ear buds again.

Oh, and I'm sorry for saying the s-word. I won't ever do that again! I promise! Pretty promise!

Amy: Haha, you're so bad. Not a problem whatsoever, and thanks again Chris! You have a great day!

Chris: You too, darling.

Amy: So there you have it! My goal for this episode was to give you ideas to expand your team, while freeing you up from some of the projects that are likely weighing you down. When you're able to do that, you can create more freedom in your business and in your life.

Don't forget to check out your show notes because all the links we talked about in this show can be found at AmyPorterfield.com/26. Also, if you like this podcast, I would really appreciate it if you would take just a few minutes and leave a review for me on iTunes. That way, I can reach so many more people with my episodes. I would truly appreciate it.

Just go to AmyPorterfield.com/review and it will take you to the page that you can click to launch iTunes and leave a review. I promise it will take just a few minutes, so thank you in advance for that.

Until next time, make it a great week!

Announcer: Thanks for listening to the Online Marketing Made Easy podcast at www.amyporterfield.com!

Show notes at: <http://www.amyporterfield.com/26>

